

Moving Forward

In order to move forward it is imperative to recognize how a state once known for its road building innovation is now recognized as having some of the worst roads in the nation. The answer lies in decades of underfunding. When compared to other states, Michigan's state and local transportation funding has ranked 42nd or worse for nearly half a century. Quite simply, our roads and bridges have not been a budgetary priority. Our crumbling roads and bridges are the result of misplaced priorities!

**Per Capita State & Local
Expenditures
(Michigan's Rank in the Nation)**

Expenditures	1964	1974	1984	1988	1992	2008
Health	5	8	9	3	12	13
Education	11	7	10	7	11	9
Welfare	31	5	3	8	17	32
Roads	43	44	42	44	49	42

- Michigan has the 8th largest public road system in the U.S.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

We did not get into this funding hole overnight and although we need to stop digging, the solution may take time. However, data from the TAMC revealing that Michigan has lost \$7.8 billion in road asset value from 2004-2011 is evidence that we must start solving the problem today.

In November 2008, the legislatively-approved and gubernatorial appointed Transportation Funding Task Force (TF2), after considerable research, recommended that the legislature double our current level of investment in transportation (\$3 billion annually) with \$1.65 billion alone needed to maintain our roads and bridges at their current condition ratings. With inflation and increased deterioration—a loss of \$1 billion in asset value annually—the \$3 billion needed in 2008, \$1.65 for roads and bridges, is likely much higher today.

Former State Rep. Rick Olson (R-Washtenaw) led a House work group which studied transportation spending and investment needs during the 2011-2012 Legislative Session. In 2012, Rep. Olson estimated the minimum annual funding increase needed just to meet our pavement preservation needs at \$1.54 billion. This does not include any new funding for routine maintenance including the maintenance of approximately 40,000 miles of gravel roads; local or state agency equipment needs; traffic safety and capacity improvements; or transit.

In the fall of 2012, a Senate Transportation Task Force held a series of hearings with the goal of determining the level of funding required to meet the short and long-term needs of Michigan's transportation infrastructure, and the funding sources and options available to raise this revenue. Testimony from a variety of sources led the group to conclude that the need is likely greater today than it was in 2008, when TF2 concluded that Michigan needed to double our current investment in transportation. While the Task Force members debated how much could be spent on preserving roads and bridges annually without negatively impacting commerce, all parties agreed that state and local road agencies could spend the additional \$1.54 billion suggested by Rep. Olson.

In 2011, Gov. Snyder showed bold leadership in his Special Message on Infrastructure by acknowledging that we can no longer put off reinvesting in our deteriorating infrastructure.

Both the Olson Report and the work of the Senate Task Force support the Governor's call for action. Our transportation infrastructure is essential to growing Michigan's economy, enhancing its quality of life and retaining young talent.

The TAMC issued a dire warning in their 2011 Annual Report.

"At current funding levels, the condition of Michigan's transportation infrastructure will continue to deteriorate. This alarming decline in condition of Michigan's infrastructure affects everyone—from businesses that rely on the transportation network to transport goods and services; from tourists visiting or traveling through our great state to our citizens who expect safe and convenient access to work and school. Reinvesting in our transportation system and maintaining these vital public assets are essential to securing a better future for all of Michigan's citizens."

During the waning days of the 2007-2008 Legislative Session, the TF2 warned "the one choice we cannot afford is to do nothing." As the quotes inside the front cover reveal, we have already ignored too many warnings. We are now seeing the results of ignoring those warnings. To quote the words of Gov. Snyder in his 2011 Infrastructure message, "it's time to seriously engage in this issue that is so vital to Michigan's future."

As we enter the 2013-2014 Legislative Session, the future of our transportation system will be decided by the members of the current Legislature. The question is simple. What kind of future do you want for your district and the great State of Michigan? Without a significant increase in road funding for both state and local road agencies, our roads and bridges will never be in better condition than they are in today. They will be worse!

Michigan's county road agencies stand ready to work in collaboration with other transportation and government leaders to deliver a state-of-the-art road and bridge network that will help dig our sluggish economy out of a deep snow.

County Road Association of Michigan—CRAM

The County Road Association of Michigan (CRAM) represents the interests and concerns of Michigan's 83 county road agencies. Along with each county road agency, CRAM is working to ensure safe and efficient roads for all who travel in Michigan.

Individual county road agencies are responsible for ensuring the safety and efficiency of all county roads and bridges within their jurisdiction. Michigan's county road agencies are staffed by talented teams of administrative, engineering, construction and road maintenance professionals. For more information on your county road agency, visit our website.

Transportation Investment Per Capita

